

Disney's Family READING PROGRAM

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DISNEY HELPS TO GET FAMILIES TO READ TOGETHER

Reading is in sharp focus as part of a national effort to improve education. The reason is simple: reading lays the foundation for learning. And the family plays an important role in reading.

One the best ways to reinforce children's reading habits is to get children and parents reading together and to make reading an enjoyable part of family life. The idea of encouraging parents and children to read together is catching on across the country, with special programs already in place in Idaho, Maryland, Massachusetts, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York. As an added incentive to family reading, Walt Disney Educational Media has developed "Disney's Family Reading Program."

Jim Gentry, national sales manager of Disney Educational Media, said that he, Senator James H. Donovan, Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, and the New York State Education Department have explored ways to involve Disney with the Parents as Reading Partners (PARP) program operating in New York.

Commenting on "Disney's Family Reading Program," Donovan said he "could not be more pleased to have Walt Disney on board in tackling the reading challenge. I know we will all benefit greatly."

"Disney's Family Reading Program" is designed to help schools and libraries launch parent/child reading programs or to enhance existing ones. The materials, featuring colorful Disney artwork, include 100 Read-Along storybooks, bookmarks, calendars to record reading time, parent/child contracts to remind families of their commitment to reading, certificates to reward participation, and buttons for children to wear to boost their pride in reading. There are also cassettes to accompany each storybook title, and an extensive guide to help implement "Disney's Family Reading Program" and to offer suggestions for related educational activities.

"Disney's Family Reading Program" was introduced at the National PTA convention in Washington, D.C. last June. More recently, Suzanne Farrell, Disney regional sales representative, has presented Disney's Family Reading Program to meetings of Parents as Reading Partners in Utica, Binghamton, and Syracuse, New York. "At each meeting the response has been tremendous," reported Farrell.

"People are impressed with the artwork on our support material, and the feelings expressed are that the Disney material will fit in beautifully with parent/child reading programs—not only through schools, but also through public libraries," Farrell added.

Disney is currently promoting information on the Family Reading Program nationally in hopes of helping educators to encourage more and more parents and children to read together. For more information on "Disney's Family Reading Program" call Customer Service toll free at 1-800-423-2555.

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